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A TRAMP THROUGH SWITZERLAND

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A TRAMP THROUGH SWITZERLAND.

BY

BENJ. F. LEGGETT.

AUTHOR OF "A SHEAF OF SONG."

*We rise and journey onward,
Through valleys green and old,
Where the far white Alps announce the morn
And keep the sunset's gold.*

—BAYARD TAYLOR,

NEW YORK:
JOHN B. ALDEN, PUBLISHER.
1887.

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TO

GEORGE GARY BUSH.

To-night, O friend, I greet the stars again
Whose kindly light o'er us so long ago
Kept patient watch above the hills of snow,
Till flush of morning bade their glory wane!—
The self-same stars!—and now my feet would fain
Re-climb the Pass as, on that storm-shut day,
When night and tempest barred the mountain way—
Save when the cloud-flash lit the spears of rain—
To see once more above the Alpine range
How fair they burned, the storm's wild fury spent,
Flooding the white hills with a beauty strange—
The ghostly pillars of the firmament!—
And with what rapture, their sweet gage withdrawn,
Mont Blanc's white glory took the kiss of Dawn!

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

Zurich.—City and Lake.—Alpine Views.—Lake Zug.— Ascent of the Rigi.—Mountain Scenery.....	9
--	---

II.

Lake Lucerne.—Tell's Chapel.—Altorf.—Up the St. Gothard Road.—Amstig.—Wassen.—Devil's Bridge. —Valley of Uri.....	16
---	----

III.

Adieu to St. Gothard.—The Turca Pass.—Snowballing in August.—Rhone Glacier.—The Pass to Grimsel. —Down the Aar.—Handeck Falls.—Meirengen....	23
--	----

IV.

From Meirengen to Giessbach Falls.—Interlachen.— Lauterbrunnen.—Staubbach Falls.—Over the Wengern Alps.—Avalanches.—Grindelwald.....	30
--	----

V.

From Interlachen to Kandersteg.—The Gemmi Pass.—A Wonderful Bridlepath.—The Battle of Leuk.—Down the Dala.—Up the Rhone.....	34
--	----

VI.

Valley of the Visp.—St. Nicolas.—Waterfalls and Glaciers.—The Wiesshorn.—Zermatt.—The Matterhorn.—The Riffelberg and Gorner Grat.....	40
---	----

VII.

First ascent of the Matterhorn.—Farewell to Zermatt. Down the Visp.—Swiss Farming.—Cottages and Customs.—From Visp to Martigny.....	53
---	----

VIII.

Over the Col de la Farclaz.—Up the Col de Balme.—Lost on the Mountains.—An Alpine Storm.—A Drowsy Watch.—Sunrise over Mont Blanc.....	54
---	----

IX.

Valley of Chamouni.—Glaciers.—Monarch of Mountains.—The Mer de Glace.—The Tête Noire Pass.—Martigny again.—The Long Walk ended	58
--	----

Mt. Vesuvius and Pompeii.....	65
A Walk in the Odenwald.....	73
Through the Black Forest.....	83

PREFATORY.

THE following pages are the record of a three weeks' tour in Switzerland. The journey was made on foot because we had more time than money at our disposal. So well pleased were we with the mode of travel that were we to repeat our experience we should choose again the knapsack and staff.

To all prospective travellers in Switzerland who wish to enjoy its scenery at their leisure, as well as to get the greatest possible enjoyment out of their journey at the least expense, we commend the pedestrian tour.

INTRODUCTION.

SWITZERLAND is the wonderland of Europe. The Alps are her everlasting walls of defence and their lofty cones the watch-towers of her liberties. With an area less than half of Maine, or twice as large as Massachusetts, she stands almost alone amid the monarchies of Europe, as fearless and free as the eagle of her native crags.

The name of her people has become a synonym for endurance and courage, and heroism; for integrity and patriotism, and undying hate of wrong.

Her history is embalmed in romance and song. Her 16,000 square miles of area contain the sublimest mountain scenery, the loftiest valleys of pastoral peace and beauty. Here are cloud-capped pyramids and foaming cascades leaping from the sky. Her glaciers are without a parallel, and her storm-cradled avalanches shake

with their crashing tread her ramparts of eternal snow.

Sturdy Republic of the mountains!
Cradled in difficulty, inured to hardship,
and fanned by the air of liberty, how could
her people be less than hardy and brave
and free!

There is but one Switzerland. In the
wild and rugged beauty of her scenery
she stands alone. The picturesque and
the sublime have laid their hands upon
her, and the woven spell which they have
wrought have given her a charm forever.

A

TRAMP THROUGH SWITZERLAND.

CHAPTER I.

ZURICH—CITY AND LAKE—ALPINE VIEWS
—LAKE ZUG—ASCENT OF THE RIGI—
MOUNTAIN SCENERY.

WE began, at Zurich, the realization of the long cherished dream of our boyhood. We had come, only the night before, from the storied glooms of the Black Forest—that goblin land of legendary lore, inwrought with magic and enchantment. Its spell still lay upon us, like the dusky shadows of its pines, so that even here, upon the border of the mountain land, we could hardly realize that we were in Switzerland.

Zurich is a charming city, beautiful for situation, and rich in rare historical associations. Here, in 1535, Miles Coverdale

gave to the world the *first* English version of the Scriptures.

In its cathedral, dating from the eleventh century, the early reformers preached the doctrines of the Reformation. We wandered through its ancient streets, and from its shady battlements looked down on lake and city environed with green slopes of rural peace and plenty.

Leaving Zurich early one morning, we climbed the Uetliberg, an eminence some two thousand feet high and about four miles from the city. From this height the outlines of distant mountains stood like gray phantoms in the morning mist. The city and lake lay in the green valley at our feet. The winding shores and the hillsides beyond were dotted with villages and hamlets, and rich in orchards, vineyards, and meadows. This, our first excursion, gave us great satisfaction as well as a keen appetite for our dinner, to which we did ample justice on our return to Zurich.

Taking the little steamer in the afternoon, we passed down the lake to Horgen. Lake Zurich is about twenty-five miles in length, and from one to two miles in width. It is surrounded with hills and

mountains, but none of very great height. Though charming in itself, it does not compare in picturesque beauty with our own Lake George. Landing at Horgen we took the old post-road over the hills to Lake Zug. It was a walk of ten miles, mostly through a richly cultivated region, though at quite an elevation above the sea. From the green slopes above Horgen we had our first glorious view of the snow-covered Alps. Toiling up these heights under the warm afternoon sun, a curve in the road brought us face to face with some half-dozen snow-mantled peaks, lifted like vast white tents against the sky! There they stood, the Sentis, the Speer, and the pyramids of Glaurus, in the white silence of a winter that had never yielded to summer's kiss. The spell of the Black Forest was broken. We were indeed passing the borders of the land of promise, for these were the out-posts of her glory. Grander scenes have since unrolled before us, loftier pinnacles have buttressed the blue vault over our heads, but this scene, standing in the golden light of that August afternoon, still wears the impress of unfading beauty—that changeless charm which first impressions give.

Passing on up the dusty windings of the road where the *diligences* enlivened the solitudes with their jangling bells, we crossed the crest of the mountain range and descended into the dark, wooded valley of the Sihl—darker for the gathering twilight—and halted for the night on the shores of Lake Zug. The dusky shadows of the mountains deepened over its quiet waters as we ended our first day's tramp and were soon lost in dreams.

In the early morning, a sail of nine miles up the lake with the Rigi looking grandly down through the rifts in its cloud-mantle, landed us at Arth, a little hamlet lying in the valley at the mountain's base. Passing on through the quaint village and the orchards lying behind it, we sought the obscure bridle-path and began the ascent of the Rigi. From the station of the mountain railway near at hand, the impatient locomotive with a single car attached, rattled off on its upward journey with a derisive whistle in nowise calculated to cheer the hearts of mountain pedestrians. Four hours of steady climbing lay before us. The hot August sun looked down upon us with glowing fervor. Up through

the lower, wooded slopes, we followed the windings of the rugged bridle-path to the barren heights beyond. Our horizon widened at every zig-zag of the road, revealing new pictures at every turn. Across broad mountain pastures sprinkled with herds,—past rude chalets and chapels whose roofs were laden with stones—over rustic bridges spanning foaming torrents—by wayside shrines and crosses where the pious herdsmen pause to pray, we plodded on and on, up the ever-winding mountain-path. Higher and yet higher, the vision expanding at every step—green valleys unwinding among the hills, and peaceful lakes gleaming in the charmed circle. Peak after peak in snowy beauty joined the spectral conclave, till from the Rigi Kulm a hundred and twenty miles of glittering ice-crag and snow-clad pinnacles like a vision of enchantment were lifted against the sky. The matchless glory of the Alps from the Sentis to the Jungfrau stood before us—

“ A line of battle tents in everlasting snow ! ”

Across the valley opposite the scarred

and desolate slope of the Rossberg frowned grimly above the silent villages which its avalanche buried eighty years ago! The Rigi Kulm is a rich mountain pasture six thousand feet high, from whence the eye may sweep over a circuit of three hundred miles. For hundreds of years these green slopes have been frequented by herdsmen and shepherds, and thousands of cattle still find pasturage here as of old. The countless lakes and villages nestled in the green valleys, and the encircling groups of snowy towers and battlements have made this one of the famous mountain panoramas of the world. The spacious hotels crowning the highest slopes and the several railways scaling the mountain's sides, annually bringing thousands of summer loungers from all parts of the world, have conspired to bring about another confusion of tongues, making this breezy height a modern tower of Babel. We turned aside from the weary jargon of human voices, and stretching ourselves upon the grassy bluff overlooking Lake Zug, from whence one might almost pitch a pebble into its quiet waters, took our noonday rest.

We found the ascent of the Rigi ex-

tremely toilsome—much more so than many higher mountains which were afterwards climbed—indeed we can recall but one experience more wearisome than this—the ascent of Vesuvius, made several months later. Descending the mountain by the southern slope we met peasants wearing heavy wooden shoes who were carrying heavy burdens on their backs to the hotels above. Old men and old women, bowed with the weight of years, yet burdened with heavy cages of poultry climbed steadily upward, pausing to rest here and there before the wayside shrines. It is wonderful what heavy loads these poor people carry up the steepest bridle-paths. Lake Lucerne—the Lake of the Four Forest Cantons—lay in the valley at our feet. Around it the purple mountains crowded to look upon its beauty, and over it the light clouds trailed their airy shadows. The transfigured beauty of the Rigi's embattled horizon had passed from view, and, hurrying down to the shore, we passed by steamer to Lucerne.

CHAPTER II.

LAKE LUCERNE—TELL'S CHAPEL—ALTORF
—UP THE ST. GOTHARD ROAD—AMSTEG
—WASSEN—DEVIL'S BRIDGE—VALLEY OF
URI.

LUCERNE is the Saratoga of Switzerland. Situated on an arm of the lake which is here hemmed in by lofty mountain peaks, it affords an out-look of great beauty and grandeur. The city on the land side is flanked by an ancient wall surmounted with watch towers. The principal attractions of the place are the bridges with their works of art and Thorwaldsen's Dying Lion—a monument to the memory of the Swiss Guards who fell in the defense of the Tuileries in August, 1792. The Lion is twenty-eight feet in length and is carved out of a natural ledge of sandstone. It is represented as lying in a grotto, fatally pierced by a broken spear, yet guarding with its

dying strength the Bourbon shield. "It wears an expression of pain and courage, of fidelity and resignation to fate, which the genius of art has faithfully wrought in stone."—From Lucerne we passed by steamer up the lake to Flüelen, a distance of twenty-five miles. Of all the Swiss lakes the Lake of the Four Forest Cantons stands unrivalled in the wild and picturesque beauty of its scenery, while the legendary and heroic associations of the olden time lend it an additional charm. The steamer excursion from Lucerne to Flüelen is unquestionably one of the finest in the world. The irregular and rugged outline of the lake, the high mountain walls, which enclose it, and the many snow-clad pinnacles which are seen from its surface, give it a singular beauty and wildness wholly its own. On the bay of Uri is the Rutli, the famous trysting-place of the Swiss patriots in 1307. On the opposite side, farther on, we passed Tell's Chapel, built by the Canton of Uri five hundred years ago, on the spot where the hero is said to have leaped from the tyrant's boat. It is a small stone structure whose walls are adorned with rude scenes from the life of Tell.

The scenery along this arm of the lake is of the wildest. Here loftier snow-capped mountains crowd closer on the bay, and deep, narrow gorges give glimpses here and there, into cold ice-grottoes and the drifted snow fields beyond. Landing at Flüelen a walk of two miles brought us to Altorf, alive with romantic associations connected with the name of Tell. It is a little town among the mountains, having less than three thousand inhabitants, and the capital of the Canton of Uri. A colossal statue of Tell stands in the market-place, and is said to occupy the spot where he aimed the arrow at the apple on the head of his son. About thirty rods from this is a fountain supposed to mark the position of the tree against which the boy stood during the trial of the archer's skill.

Upon the walls of an ancient tower hard by are depicted in rude fresco the stirring events which here transpired. Tell's statue represents him with one hand uplifted grasping an arrow, while with the other he holds his trusty bow. It is the moment of his defiant reply concerning the purpose of the concealed arrow. The villagers cherish considerable faith in Tell's exploits, and

hold his story quite as likely to be true as false. What matter whether it be romance or history? It has stirred the blood of youth for generations past and will for generations yet to come.

We left the old town at last, and took our way up the valley of the impetuous Reuss towards the Bristenstock whose white crown, 10,000 feet high, seemed to close the valley in the distance. We were on the great St. Gothard road, one of the oldest highways into Italy. The pass of St. Gothard begins properly at the foot of the Bristenstock, where the little village of Amsteg has stopped to rest in the shadow of the mountain. This pass is one of the grandest of the Alpine gorges, with the wildest of wild rivers plunging through it. From Amsteg to Andermatt, about fourteen miles, the scenery is most grand and beautiful. Sometimes the road winds along the almost perpendicular wall hundreds of feet above the foaming Reuss. Then it zig-zags along the mountain-side, or crosses the gorge at a dizzy height over bridges spanning the torrent by a single arch. Again it pierces the solid rock in safety while the avalanche slides harmlessly above. From cloud-cap-

ped heights on either hand white cascades leap from cliff to cliff and plunge into the river of foam below. All day the wild rumble of the Reuss greeted our ears as it tumbled through the wild gorge white as snow:—all day we quenched our thirst at icy rills leaping down from perpetual snow-fields. The whole Pass is a perpetual succession of pictures which words fail to describe.—We reached Wasen after dark where we were glad to rest for the night. Our walk of twenty-one miles from Fluelen gave us sleep unbroken even by the perpetual thunders of the Reuss.

We left Wasen early in the morning, and walked to Geschenen, three miles, to breakfast. A little beyond Wasen we passed the Rohrbach Fall, and just as we reached Geschenen, a deep valley opened at our right and revealed the Rhone Glacier lying white and still in the morning sun far above us. Down the wild gorge came a tributary of the Reuss, bringing the glacier's tribute to the lower valleys. Near Geschenen we found hundreds of men at work on the St. Gothard railroad, and farther we passed the entrance to the great tunnel through which

the railway trains are to pass under the Alps into Italy!

Beyond this the Reuss makes a wild plunge of a hundred feet into the misty chasm, while on the overhanging spray the rainbow builds its arch of peace. Here is the Devil's Bridge.

“With a single arch from ridge to ridge
It leaps across the terrible chasm
Yawning beneath us black and deep,
As if, in some convulsive spasm,
The summits of the hills had cracked,
And made a road for the cataract,
That raves and rages down the steep!”

The old bridge over which the French and Austrians struggled so fiercely for the mastery a hundred years ago, lies in ruins below. A little farther on at an elevation of 4,600 feet, we passed through the *Urner-loch*—a tunnel in the solid rock, seventy yards in length, and emerged into the valley of Uri—a green pasture-land walled in by snow-patched mountains. The St. Gothard road is a grand achievement of engineering skill. How changed is this mountain pass since the vandal hordes of the north first swarmed through it into Italy! In place of the obscure mountain trail is a splendid

carriage road, tunnelling the rocks, sweeping around curves, zig-zagging up the mountain-side, crawling along the face of perpendicular ledges, or spanning the white river of foam a hundred feet below ! The first hamlet in the valley of Uri is Andermatt, and about a mile and a half farther is Hospenthal. The former has a population of about four hundred, and the latter somewhat more.

CHAPTER III.

ADIEU TO ST. GOTHARD—THE FURCA PASS
—SNOWBALLING IN AUGUST—RHONE
GLACIER—THE PASS TO GRIMSEL—DOWN
THE AAR—HANDECK FALLS—MEIRINGEN.

AT Hospenthal, in the little valley of Uri, our road diverged from the great St. Gothard highway, toward the Furca Pass. The summit of the St. Gothard Pass is about seven miles farther on. Hospenthal is an ancient mountain town overlooked by an old tower built by the Lombards. In this high Alpine valley, where winter lasts eight months of the year, the sun blazed down fiercely upon us, though snow lay upon the mountains all around. The men and women were making hay in the meadows; and in the lower pastures, and on the mountain slopes hundreds of cattle were grazing. At some distance beyond Realp, where we halted for dinner, we began climbing out of this green valley, en-

livened by countless flocks and the tinkling of herd-bells, by the endless windings of the Furca Road. From the summit of the Pass, the narrow valley threaded by the swift river, lay at our feet. Around it towered high, barren mountains, while down their slopes leaped torrents of foam. In the distance the Bernese Alps lifted their white shoulders above the encircling mountains. Cool breezes from regions of ice and snow blew over the Pass, tempering the summer heat. Behind the Furca Hotel, which enjoys the reputation of being one of the highest habitations in Europe, we indulged in the novel experience of snowballing in August! The road from the Furca led us by interminable windings to the valley of the Rhone and its wonderful glacier. We doubt whether there is in all Switzerland a more tortuous road than this over the Furca Pass. One must travel for miles in order to effect but a slight change, comparatively, in altitude. From the broad curves of the lower slopes we looked down upon several miles of the Rhone Glacier. This frozen cataract is imbedded between mountains, 10,000 and 12,000 feet high, and ex-

tends back fifteen miles to their summits. Fed by the eternal snows from these heights, and slowly yielding to the sun, it crawls along till it becomes a mass of rays tal, now smooth and white, now shattered and splintered as it breaks over precipices in its way, forming a series of ice cascades in its slow but certain march to the valley. There lay its colossal proportions, while in fairy-like beauty the crystal minarets, crowning the final fall, glittered in the sun. It was a vision of rare splendor which made us forget our weariness as we descended into the desolate valley. From this dissolving mass flows the river Rhone—five hundred miles to the sea. In the morning we explored the Glacier's dome-like base, and drank at the muddy rill which issues therefrom to form the Rhone. For a considerable distance below the base of the glacier, the valley is literally piled with rocks, boulders, and gravel, making it a wild picture of desolation and ruin. We climbed out of this cold, gloomy valley by a wretched bridle-path over the rugged Maienwand—a torn, gullied, and rock-strewn slope, fringed with rhododendrons, and commanding a magnificent view of

the upper Glacier. At the summit of the Pass—an elevation of 7,000 feet—we came to the Lake of the Dead, where the French and Austrians buried their slain, after a fierce engagement here in 1799. It is a broad pool of ice water in a rocky basin fed by the melting snows and so limpid that objects can be seen many feet below the surface. We could easily imagine that the white stones in its depths were the bones of the dead which had rested there for nearly a century. Beyond this mountain tarn our path led us across huge drifts of freshly fallen snow, while the peaks all around were arrayed in spotless white. From the summit of the Pass to the Grimsel Hospice, a thousand feet below, the obscure bridle-path, partly indicated by stakes, is the roughest and rockiest imaginable. The huge, barren rocks, crushed and splintered, or smoothed and rounded, tell of the monster glaciers which crawled across them ages ago !

Around the Hospice tower snowy peaks from 9,000 to 14,000, feet high. In a rocky depression in the rear lies a gloomy little lake, upon whose narrow margin scant past-

urage grows in the brief Alpine summer

The Hospice was formerly a refuge for such poor wayfarers as necessity compelled to cross the mountains;—now it is an hotel thronged with tourists during the season of summer travel. Some distance to the westward the Aar issues as a muddy stream from two glaciers, one of which thrusts its diminished, foot far down the gorge. Our path followed the river down a wild ravine overlooked by the lofty Agassizhorn on the left. The valley is narrow and desolate in the extreme, being almost entirely destitute of animal and vegetable life. For a distance of nine miles there were only two miserable dwellings. The perfect sea of rocks scattered everywhere, told of the mighty agencies which had wrought here in the past. We crossed vast sloping ledges of gneiss worn smooth and deeply striated by glacial action. Upon one of these glacier-hewn tablets was inscribed "*L. Agassiz—1838.*" Our path followed closely the swiftly flowing Aar, often bridging the torrent at a dizzy height above the foaming waters. Farther down the valley the scanty soil began to yield mosses, grasses, and rhododendrons, and yet farther gloomy

groves of pine lent their somber plumes to the lonely waste, and thinly fringed the slopes on either hand.

The Handeck Fall, in a region of pines which we reached at noon, is regarded by many as the finest in Switzerland. It is formed by the Aar making a plunge of two hundred and fifty feet down a narrow chasm, while upon the left, but a little lower, it is joined by the crystal waters of the Aerlenbach. The two streams fall unbroken half way down, and then unite in a dense cloud of spray. From the dizzy bridge above the fall we looked down into the frightful chasm and saw the rainbow spanning the blended rivers.

We rested here an hour, breaking our fast at the little log-built inn, and then passed on down the valley, which grew broader and greener as we descended. Farther, rude chalets became more frequent, and these were roofed with boards, or shingles, with stones piled upon them to hold them in place;—a common mode of roofing in the mountain valleys of Switzerland.

In the vicinity of Guttannen, a thriftless looking village, there were patches of grain and strips of meadow dotted thickly with

heaps of stones. The people were cutting the grass along the path with sickles, and carrying it for miles on their backs. Near Imhof the carriage road begins, winding in places along the precipitous slopes of the mountains high above the Aar, which thunders through a wild gorge far below. On, down the green valley we went, past Imhof with its cottage roofs laden with stones, till, just above Meiringen, the white falls of the Reichenbach hung in the dusk over the tree tops on the left. At Meiringen we halted for the night, having walked from the Rhone Glacier since morning.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM MEIRINGEN TO GIESSBACH FALL—
INTERLACHEN—LAUTERBRUNNEN—STAUB-
BACH FALL—OVER THE WENGERN ALP
—AVALANCHES—GRINDELWALD.

MEIRINGEN is important as being the converging point of several Alpine routes. Our course was over the carriage road to Lake Brienz and then by foot-path over a spur of the mountains to Giessbach. The great attraction here is the renowned waterfall, or rather series of seven cascades by which the mountain torrent descends as by a dizzy stairway more than eleven hundred feet to the lake. The Fall has a picturesque beauty of its own, though lacking in the grandeur of the Handeck or the Reichenbach. From Giessbach to Interlachen, between the Lakes of Brienz and Thun, a brief respite from foot-travel was afforded us by steamer and rail. From Interlachen we took our way up the swift Lütichine toward the cloud-hooded Mönch and the

white-robed Jungfrau. Upward we journeyed in the shadow of frowning mountains often alive with the mellow music of the Alpine horn, till Lauterbrunnen—the valley of cascades—opened before us, with the beautiful Staubbach Fall. Into the narrow mountain-walled valley from a height of 980 feet leaps the cloud-cradled torrent and crumbles into spray before it reaches the bottom!—a “brook of dust” truly. The white banner of mist tossed by the wind in graceful folds against the dizzy wall seems like a truce-flag waved from the skyey battlements of some old citadel.

Lauterbrunnen on the Lütchine is mainly a hamlet of booths for the sale of wood and ivory carving, pictures, and alpenstocks. Here as in other places in Switzerland, lace weavers sit by the roadside weaving the finest of fabrics by the rudest of methods. Here and there are swarthy mountaineers with high peaked hats who blow ringing blasts from Alpine horns which set the wild echoes flying. We passed out of this most picturesque valley into which the sun shines but a few hours daily, by climbing over the Wengern Alp and the Little Scheideck—those lofty

mountain pastures facing the white peaks of perpetual snow. The path wound steeply upward from Lauterbrunnen, revealing at every turn broader glimpses of the upper valley with its glaciers and waterfalls. The Jungfrau, Mönch, Eiger, Silverhorn, Snowhorn, and others looked down upon us from a height of 13,000 feet.

The range over which we passed was alive with herds of cows and goats and the constant tinkling of their bells. Several rude chalets were passed where the herds are assembled twice daily for milking. These were built of logs and the roofs laden with stones. For hours our way lay in the very shadow of the Alpine monarchs, and we beheld their glory face to face. Near the Hotel Jungfrau we saw avalanches, loosened by the mid-day sun, plunge down the Jungfrau with a rumble and crash that shook the mountains like an earthquake. Again and again we heard their crashing thunders above the clouds but watched in vain for their appearance.

From the Hotel Bellevue on the summit of the Little Scheideck the whole valley of Grindelwald lay like a map before us. From this point the bridle-path descends to the

green valley famous for its immense pastures and herds and glaciers. The dissolving glaciers of Grindelwald form the Black Lütschine, which we followed for many miles on our return to Interlachen.—Darkness overtook us long before we reached Zwei Lütschinen. Here we tarried for the night, thankful that the morrow would bring us a day of rest. It was Saturday night and we had made twenty-four miles since morning. Sunday was a day of rain—the first since our tour began. Our packs were at Interlachen, to which place, towards evening, we managed to return.

CHAPTER V.

FROM INTERLACHEN TO KANDERSTEG.—THE
GEMMI PASS.—A WONDERFUL BRIDLE-
PATH.—THE BATHS OF LEUK.—DOWN THE
DALA—UP THE RHONE.

SUNDAY evening was spent at Interlachen. The storm had passed and left a brighter prospect for the morrow. Interlachen is a delightful place in several respects. It is situated in a fruitful valley surrounded with hamlets and orchards and mountains. The views from its streets are charming. Many enjoyable excursions may be made in its vicinity. Altogether it is a place where the pilgrim will delight to tarry.

We left Interlachen in the early dawn while yet the gray mist shrouded the sleeping town. Our destination was the high mountain valley of Kandersteg—twenty-five miles away. Our road wound along the shores of the picturesque Thun for several miles, and then turned to the left

over the hills to Aeschi:—thence up the green valley of the Emd with the Niesen towering above us, past Mühlenen to Frutigen where we turned aside up the narrow Kandersthal. All day we wandered up this green valley, with the August heat tempered by the cool air from the mountains. Along the borders of the stream were strips of grain and meadow. Although there was a considerable display of industry, it was, evidently, a marked case of the pursuit of agriculture under difficulties.—The mountains on either hand are lofty and steep, yet some of them have green pasture slopes away up toward their summits where herds of cattle were grazing.

A little before reaching Kandersteg the valley is crowded into narrower limits, and farther up the streams the mountain peaks were white with snow.

Kandersteg lies in a rocky bowl whose sides and rim are lofty mountain walls. We reached it at dusk and found it cold and dismal. Instead of the evening quiet there was the voice of many waters rushing down from the snow-fields and leaping from the rocks on every side. We slept, however, in spite of the confusion, and awoke in

the morning to find ourselves completely walled in, with no visible way of escape! We left the little hamlet quietly sleeping in its snow-girt valley and took our way, shivering with cold, up the Gemmi Pass. Looking up from below there seemed no possible way of escape from our gloomy surroundings. To climb the mountain wall by the route indicated seemed impossible! The path mounts upward by many zig-zags from the base of the Gellihorn, and leads through a gloomy fringe of evergreens at a dizzy height above the valley, disclosing scenes of rare beauty and wildness. Above the wooded region and interspersing the rocky desolations are green pastures where herds of sheep and cattle were grazing. Higher in the Pass the scene became wilder, and even the lowing herds seemed to be affected by the general gloom and to long for the lowland pastures. Vast glaciers, creeping down from mountains ten thousand feet high, brought to the borders of these pastures the chill of the perpetual ice-fields. The only sounds were the lowing of herds, the bleating of sheep and the tinkling of their bells.

Four hours from Kandersteg brought us

to the Schwarenbach Inn, perched upon a steep declivity above a deep gorge. Here, at an altitude of about seven thousand feet, we took refreshments and then passed on to the Dauben Sea. This is a lake about a mile long fed by the muddy waters of the Lämmern Glacier, which in the past wrought wild desolation in this region. The lake has no outlet and is said to be frozen seven months of the year. It lies like a steel-gray mirror framed in by jagged rocks and brooded over by the silence of death; while all night long the pitying stars look down upon its utter loneliness.

A little beyond this point, at an elevation of 7,500 feet, we reached the summit of the Pass on the shoulder of the Daubenhorn, two thousand feet below its bald, white crown. Below us lay the valley of the Rhone and in the distance the Alps of Vallais. The lofty cones of the Matterhorn, Bruneckhorn, Wiesshorn, and Dent, Blanche stood before us in their white glory! Three thousand feet below us lay the Baths of Lenk. A little below the summit of the Pass the mountain wall drops almost perpendicularly 1800 feet, and along this giddy declivity we descend by one of

the most wonderful of Alpine bridle-paths. The winding way is hewn in the face of the rock and in many places the mountain mass overhangs the narrow road! The steepest places and also the shorter curves are protected by railings. This spiral stairway hewn in the mountain wall is about two miles long and not less than five feet wide. It was built more than a hundred years ago. The views in descending are wild and beautiful. Looking up from the valley no trace of the road can be seen. One would never dream from appearances that scores of people daily climbed that mountain side. The ascent is readily made on horseback, but to descend by that method is extremely perilous. A few years ago, a lady in making the attempt, fell from her horse and lost her life. Invalids make the journey in either direction in easy chairs borne by trusty carriers.

We reached the Bath of Leuk, a place of about five hundred inhabitants, at noon. The spirit of rivalry among the hotel-keepers, though favorable to tourists, must be ruinous to themselves, when a dinner of six courses can be had for thirty cents!

The principal attractions are the numerous

hot springs and the bathing establishments connected with them. In the baths the patients sit for hours parboiling themselves and deriving therefrom either real, or *imaginary* benefit, which is about the same thing. The Dala, fed by these boiling springs, cools itself in the wild ravine below on its way to the Rhone. We followed the stream down the valley for many miles. On our way we passed the village of Albinen, perched upon a lofty slope at our left, and reached only by a series of rude ladders extending from ledge to ledge up the almost perpendicular mountain-side! The lower portion of our road descended very rapidly by many windings to the ancient town of Leuk with its crumbling castle on the banks of the Rhone.

Though foot-sore and weary from our tedious mountain travel, we hurried on through the stony streets of the quaint old village, over the Rhone, past Suesten, and on across the broad level reaches of meadow-land to Turtman, where we ended our twenty-five miles of weary pilgrimage.

CHAPTER VI.

VALLEY OF THE VISP.—ST. NICOLAS.—
WATERFALLS AND GLACIERS.—THE
WEISSHORN—ZERMATT.—THE MATTER-
HORN.—RIFFELBERG AND GORNER GRAT.

EARLY in the morning we journeyed up the Rhone valley, next to the Rhine perhaps in richness and fertility, while the mist hung low upon the mountains and the clouds threatened rain. Since we drank at the source of the Rhone at the foot of the mighty glacier, it has become a great river, gathering volume and force from every rill on its triumphal march to the sea. Our way led through interminable avenues of Lombardy poplars skirting the rich meadows and fields of corn and hemp till we came where the Visp issuing from its valley of vineyards, joins the Rhone.

From Visp to Zermatt, one of the highest of the Swiss valleys, the route is alive with interest. There are cascades

and mountains and glaciers in rich profusion. Winding through the narrowing valley the bridle-path skirts the rapid stream white with foam under the shadows of the grim mountains. Beyond Stalden a brief shower compelled us to seek shelter amid the picturesque surroundings of a Swiss kitchen. The furniture was not luxurious. There were a rude loom and a huge fire-place; a table and a few chairs. In one corner lay a heap of black balls the size of one's head. They looked very much like cannon shot, but they proved to be cheese. The door bore the date, 1722. Farther on we saw the little hamlet of Emd with its white-walled church, perched high up on a dizzy slope as if clinging to the mountain-side. Still farther we crossed the stream to our left, while for miles on our right we had the ruins of the old road which was destroyed by an earthquake in 1855. Ten miles from Visp we came to St. Nicolas, a town of a thousand inhabitants, yet having no communication with the outside world save by a mule path! In the afternoon we had before us, up the valley, a vast mountain crowned with snow, from which the wind came down fresh and cool.

A little beyond St. Nicolas we came to a lofty water-fall which leaps down the mountain-side by a few bold plunges, a thousand feet or more. Opposite the little hamlet of Randa the Weisshorn lifted its white cone 15,000 feet in air, and from its snow-fields a glacier crawled slowly toward the valley. High up on the left the Festi glacier came boldly down from the lofty Dome, sunned itself on the heights a while, then leaped the rocks in cascades of creamy foam. More and more the mountains crowded upon the valley while the wildness of the scenery was enhanced by the increasing altitude. Suddenly, as we rounded a curve near Zermatt the snow-white cone of the Matterhorn towered high above the surrounding peaks like a pillar of the sky! Its summit stood in the orange glow of sunset while the shadows of twilight brooded in the valley.

Zermatt is one of the highest valleys of Europe—5,400 feet above the sea—and is over-looked by the High Alps. It may lack the pastoral beauty of Chamouni yet it is a formidable rival, being about two thousand feet higher. Surrounded by slopes of barren rocks and swarthy firs,

and over-looked by peaks of snow, it clasps three glaciers in its arms and still rejoices in its greenness.

At 4.30 of an August morning which had the frosty tingle of winter in its breath, we left Zermatt for the ascent of the Riffelberg and the Gorner Grat. High above us stood the Matterhorn like a mountain of pearl in the rose-flush of dawn. Before us lay the base of the great Gorner Glacier, and issuing from it the Visp flowed past us—a torrent of ice-water. The air was intensely cold and it required vigorous exercise to keep up the circulation. The ascent, usually made in about three hours, is by one of the steepest of the well-travelled bridle-paths. The way leads first through green meadows and then through groves of pine and Alpine cedars to the higher altitudes where only dwarfish rhododendrons grow. Upward we climbed toward the growing light while far above us the early sunbeams touched, one by one, the cones of snow, then glided down to light the shadowy valley.

From the table-land of the Riffelberg the out-look is grand and beautiful, but from the Gorner Grat, an hour and a half

farther up, the loftier glories of the Alpine world stand forth unveiled.

We stood upon the rocky crest, more than 10,000 feet above the sea and completely encircled by an Alpine wall of snow-peaks and glaciers. Clear and bold stood out the broad, rounded domes of snow, and lifted ice-horns tossing the glaciers from their glittering tips! How cold and still they stood against the cloudless blue! Conspicuous over all, because of its nearness, is the Matterhorn—the chief charm and glory of Zermatt. Its uplifted crest, 15,000 feet in air, “announces the morn and keeps the sunset’s-gold.” The lofty spires of the Mischabel group, the Wiesshorn, the Dent Blanche, the Breithorn and hosts of others seemed to bear aloft the blue sky on their rosy crowns.

“How faintly flushed, how phantom fair,
Was Monte Rosa hanging there,
A thousand shadowy penciled valleys
And snowy dells, in a golden air.”

The day was one of a thousand. Not a breath of vapor stained the whole broad heaven! The glory of the mountains was completely unveiled, and at one glance the eye swept the whole vast panorama. The

Gorner Glacier with its wonderful moraines coiling about the base of the rocky crest where we stood, revealed its entire length to our view. It is a most perfect and beautiful specimen of its kind. Away from Monte Rosa and beyond, it coils about mountains white with eternal snow, and fed by hosts of tributaries on its way, it creeps down like a huge monster stiffened with cold, to warm itself in the valley. The broad belts of rock and gravel banding its length, or heaped at regular intervals along its margin, make it still more the coiled and spotted dragon that it seems.

Distance, in this pure mountain air, is wholly illusive. Everything is so clearly and sharply defined that one fails utterly in forming any correct estimate as to the remoteness of objects. To all appearances, Monte Rosa could be reached in an hour, yet it is forty miles away! Above the snow-line the songs of birds and the murmurs of insects vanish; there is only the silence of earth and sky. Nature's innumerable voices are muffled in snow.

There are but few Alpine views which can compare favorably with this from the Gorner Grat. That from the Rigi Kulm

is grand and beautiful, but far inferior since the mountains are more remote and less sharply defined. This is a picture which stands alone—one which a lifetime can never efface.

CHAPTER VII.

FIRST ASCENT OF THE MATTERHORN.—FAREWELL TO ZERMATT.—DOWN THE VISP VALLEY.—SWISS FARMING. — COTTAGES AND CUSTOMS.—FROM VISP TO MARTIGNY.

IN returning to Zermatt we met belated parties of ladies and gentlemen toiling up in the heat of the day. Knowing well how tedious the ascent had been in the early morning, we did not envy them their experience at noon-day.

In the little churchyard at Zermatt are buried four of the party which made the first ascent of the Matterhorn. This daring feat was accomplished on the 14th of July, 1865, by four Englishmen and three Swiss guides. Armed with alpenstocks, and tied together by a long rope, they succeeded in reaching the summit, but in descending, not far from the top, one of the party lost his footing and was precipitated, with two of his friends and one of

the guides, to a depth of four thousand feet upon the ice and rocks below! The remainder of the party were saved by the breaking of the rope which was designed to insure their safety!

Since that tragic event the route has been so improved by blasting and by the erection of rope railings, that now the ascent of the Matterhorn is a common occurrence—though a most perilous undertaking at the best. Above the beautiful marble tablets which the hand of affection has placed over these English graves, stands, in full view, the grim ice-pyramid—their lasting memorial.

We would fain have lingered in Zermatt for a season, but other scenes beckoned us to resume our journey. Pausing at the curve in the road which gave us our first view of the grand old Matterhorn, we took a long lingering look at its noon-day glory while memory photographed it forever.

In retracing our steps through the upper part of the Visp valley, we often wondered how the people managed to subsist. There is so little arable land that it seems impossible to live on the products of the

soil. The secret, doubtless, lies in the fact that their wants are few and simple, and that everything is utilized. In the tourist season many find employment as guides and porters. The long, dreary winters are favorable for wood and ivory carving and other mechanical work which finds a ready market in the summer. The mountain pastures support large herds of cows and goats, from which great quantities of butter and cheese are made.

The narrow valleys are cultivated very industriously, and the thin strips of meadow starred with crocus and gentian, afford rich aftermath. No rod of arable land is allowed to lie fallow, and even grass fringing the bridle-paths is gathered with the sickle. In these high valleys the plow seems to be unknown. Its use would involve the cost and keeping of a team, while the use of the pick and spade involves neither. With these the soil is prepared for the seed, and the work is as thoroughly done as with the plow. Irrigation is systematically practiced. This, no doubt, increases the production of the soil many fold. The multitudes of little mountain streams leaping down the slopes everywhere, are read-

ily conducted, by means of trenches, over the meadows, so that the crops never suffer from drouth. Without the common facilities for transportation—for there are no roads—all burdens must be borne upon the back. We saw women thus carrying hay from the meadows to the barn, and even climbing a ladder with their burden, and depositing it in the loft.

The picturesque character of the rural Swiss cottage has been celebrated in romance and song. Many of them are neat and tasteful, but too often they fall far short of our ideal. Under the broad projecting eaves, onions, herbs and corn are hung for shelter. Little bunches of gleanings from the grain patches, and fruit ripening in the windows, lend an air of thrift and economy.

Sometimes the front of the cottage bears in large letters, the owner's, or builder's name, followed by a sentiment, a benediction, or a prayer. The ground floor, however, is generally a stable where in winter the cows, sheep, and goats live in delightful proximity to the family overhead.

Switzerland is mainly Protestant, yet

chapels, shrines and crosses, are found frequently by the roadsides and along the bridle-paths, on the mountains and in the valleys. Rude crucifixes, in wood or stone, from a foot in height to life-size, are often found by the roadside.

Mendicants are found in Switzerland as in every country, yet the percentage of persons subsisting by alms is only about one-third as large as in England. By the wayside the tourist may often hear some lugubrious song, or tale of misery, or look upon some hideous deformity which is its owner's stock in trade. Goitre prevails to a frightful extent among the poorer classes in the mountain districts.

Our last night in the valley of the Visp was spent in the little village of Stalden situated on a spur of the mountains overrun with vineyards. It was already dark when we arrived and it was with some difficulty that we found the dingy little inn where we took such rest as the long day's march had richly earned. We had walked twelve hours and had reached our highest altitude thus far—more than 10,000 feet above the sea.

A walk of four miles in the morning to

breakfast gave us such a relish for our repast as pampered appetites rarely know.— We passed down the Rhone valley from Visp to Sierre by the lumbering *diligence* beclouded in dust, and trundled along to the sleepy jingle of its bells. After a ride by rail from Sierre to Martigny in an atmosphere of torrid heat, we were more than willing to resume our knapsacks again, and with them the freedom and freshness of the hills.

CHAPTER VIII.

OVER THE COL DE LA FORCLAZ.—UP THE
COL DE BALME.—LOST ON THE MOUNTAIN.
—AN ALPINE STORM — A DROWSY
WATCH—SUNRISE OVER MOUNT BLANC!

WE reached Martigny about noon, and soon turned our faces toward the world-renowned valley of Chamouni. The routes over several of the famous Alpine Passes center at Martigny :—over the Simplon to Lake Maggiore,—over the Great St. Bernard to Aosta,—and over the Tete Noire and the Col de Balme to Chamouni. It is a nine hours' walk by the Col de Balme and it was already past noon. Beyond Martigny le Bourg we cross the Dranse coming down from the Pass of St. Bernard and bringing its tribute to the Rhone. Above the town the road begins to ascend by many windings through vineyards and orchards. Higher it leads through a belt of woodland, and above this discloses rare vistas of mountain, stream, and valley.

Tourists, ascending and descending, in carriages, on horseback and on foot, enliven the way with laughter and song.

We met huge wagon-loads of ice from the Glacier of Trient going down to the ice-houses of Martigny and the towns below. A sensible plan truly this putting in the ice in August!

Late in the afternoon we reached the Col de la Forclaz—the boundary range between Switzerland and France and descended into the valley of the Trient. Beyond us rose the gloomy height of the Col de Balme. Crossing the green valley swept by the cool breath of the neighboring glacier we followed up a wild stream draining the mountain pastures above. The path mounted boldly by many zig-zags and windings through a black, gloomy forest, desolated and thinned here and there, by avalanches. Upward we climbed, stumbling over roots and stones, for night and darkness, hastened and intensified by a gathering storm, were rapidly gathering about us.

We had expected to find shelter and rest at the hotel on the summit of the Pass, but the distance was greater than we had anticipated. When we emerged from the

wooded slope into the open pasture there was no trace of any human habitation to be seen—no friendly light to guide our wanderings. Still we pushed on over the rugged pasture slope, tangled with low bushes and gullied with rains, as best we could. Finally it became too dark to proceed only as flashes of lightning revealed the path and showed for an instant the frowning mountains and the wild grandeur of the storm. Hastening on after each lurid gleam, and peering through the darkness for some humble shelter, we discovered at last some old, deserted log huts, or sheep stables. To add to our discomfort the big drops began to fall, and fearing that we should miss the hotel in the darkness and also be unable to return to this shelter again, we concluded to stop at once for the night. Scarcely had an entrance been effected when the storm burst over us in all its fury. The wind came howling down the Pass with an energy that threatened to leave us shelterless in spite of the stones heaped upon the roof. Our rude hut was lighted too often by the lurid lightning, revealing through the spacious chinks the lofty frowning ranges, while

“Far along
From peak to peak the rattling crags among
Leaped the live thunder,”

whose many-voiced reverberations shook the very foundations of the hills. The rain came down in torrents and soon the swollen streams, plunging through the darkness, added to the general confusion the voice of many waters.

After a few hours the storm abated and ere midnight the stars shone peacefully again over the desolate mountains. The cheerless cold which succeeded the storm made it perilous to sleep, destitute as we were of extra covering, and so the long dreary hours of the night were spent in sleepless vigils. Unfortunately we were without matches so that we could neither kindle a fire for our comfort nor see to note the slowly passing hours. Hungry and weary, drearily the sleepless hours dragged along. Long before dawn, stiff with cold, we left our humble shelter and groped our way by the light of the stars, toward the summit of the Pass. Over broken ground, torn and gullied by torrents, we stumbled for an hour before reaching the hotel. Though still dark we thought that

the dawn could not be far distant, so we climbed a commanding eminence a half hour to the right, and waited for the sunrise! For long, weary, drowsy, almost endless hours, they seemed, we walked and raced and wrestled upon the wind-swept height and watched for the first trace of dawn. It was a dreary watch, but like the storm, it had its end. At length the east brightened, the stars paled, and there dawned upon us in the growing light the white glory of Mont Blanc and the spectral wall of the Bernese Alps with its pinnacles of snow! At our feet stretched away the green vale of Chamouni and above and beyond it towered the Mont Blanc range. The vision expanded with the increasing light as countless snow-clad pinnacles "caught the sunrise on their crowns and were golden with day." Minerva-like the grand vision sprang from star-mailed darkness into light—Dawn's glorious compensation for the hungry watch and the sleepless night of storm!

CHAPTER IX.

VALLEY OF CHAMOUNI—GLACIERS—THE
MONARCH OF MOUNTAINS—THE MER DE
GLACE—THE TETE NOIRE PASS—MAR-
TIGNY AGAIN—THE LONG WALK ENDED.

WE descended from our mount of vision by a steep and wretched bridle-path over a region covered with slabs of slate and boulders to the little village of Tour where the glacier of the same name thrusts its white foot down into the valley.

The vale of Chamouni is fifteen miles long by three-fourths of a mile wide—a ribbon strath of emerald, bordering the Arve. On one side it is walled by the ranges of the Aiguilles Rouges and the Brevant, and on the other by the grand Mont Blanc chain with its gigantic glaciers like so many ice-cataracts tumbling into the valley. Chamouni ranks second in altitude among the lofty Alpine valleys, but in the unrivalled grandeur of its glacier

scenery it stands pre-eminent. Its summers are short and warm, while its winters lasting from October to May, are extremely rigorous.

Threading the narrow valley we halted at Argentière where we broke our long fast in full view of its grand old glacier, which sparkled in the sun above us and cooled the air with its icy breath. A pleasant walk of six miles down the quiet and fertile valley brought us to the village of Chamouni. We passed several glaciers by the way, among them the Mer de Glace, creeping down from the eternal ice-fields of Mont Blanc to the green meadows which they over-shadow. From the Mer de Glace flows the Aveiron, which joins the Arve just above the village of Chamouni.

Many excursions are made from the valley to various points of the Mont Blanc chain. The heights most accessible are Montauvert, the Chapeau, the Jardin (9,143 feet) and the Flegère. Mont Blanc itself was first ascended about a hundred years ago. The ascent is now frequently made, though with great peril to life and limb. The mountain-sides, to the distance of three or four thousand feet above the

valley are robed in somber forests of fir. Through these we ascend in two or three hours to Montauvert, 6,300 feet above the sea. From this point the grander glories of the glacial world are spread before us. The Mer de Glace formed by the union of three vast glaciers which fill the highest gorges of the Mont Blanc chain, creeps slowly toward the valley. This wonderful "sea of ice" is twelve miles long and from one to four miles wide. It is perhaps the most celebrated glacier in the world. Looking down upon its huge motionless billows—its glittering ice-pinnacles and desolate moraines, and then upward to the majestic monarch from which they spring, thrills one with inexpressible awe!

The Mer de Glace is like a stormy sea

"That heard a mighty voice
"And stopped at once amid its maddest plunge."

Mont Blanc and its glaciers have made the green, quiet vale of Chamouni, the charmed valley of the world.

"Mont Blanc is the Monarch of Mountains!
They crowned him long ago."

He is 13 miles long and from five to six miles in width. His highest point is 15,787

feet above the sea. He towers 7,000 feet above the snow line! Some forty glaciers have their birth in the eternal winter over which this white-robed monarch reigns.

To study glacier phenomena on the grandest scale, amid all the glory of ice-girdled and snow-crowned mountains, one must needs locate at Chamouni and take his lessons in its surroundings.

Leaving Chamouni we retraced our steps to Argentiere where we took the Tete Noire route to Martigny. And here again only a bridle-path threads the wild, boulder-strewn valley through which glaciers once plowed their way leaving these rocky memorials of their march. The summit of the Pass is reached at an elevation of 5,000 feet. Passing the wild, barren valley of Berard from which the Eau Noire descends, we took the mountain stream for our guide down the desolate, stony gorge for many miles. On the way we passed the little hamlet of Valorcine consisting of low chalets clustered around a little church and protected from avalanches by a sturdy stone wall. Increasing wildness gathered about us as we advanced, till finally the rugged path, mounting high above the gloomy

gorge through which the river plunged entered the tunnelled rocks of the Tete Noire.

Across the wild ravine opposite rise frowning peaks from 8,000 to 10,000 feet high. Emerging from the tunnel the road winds along the precipitous slope high above the desolate gorge, till turning to the right it passes around the brow of the mountain and leads through a beautiful forest of firs up the valley of the Trient. Farther on the valley widens, the forest disappears and we strike the old trail to Chamouni.

On the right the gloomy height of the Col de Balme looked down upon us—a grim reminder of the night of storm! On the left the broad range of the Forclaz lay between us and the valley of rest. We climbed to the summit of the Pass through a drizzling mist and shuddered as we passed into Switzerland at the prospect of ten dreary miles of rain.

Low clouds raked the wooded slopes and hid the mountains behind their ragged fringes. Down the long, weary windings of the road we wandered—ten-fold longer and wearier for the gathering darkness and the rain. For three hours in the pitiless

storm, foot-sore and lame, we limped through the waning light and the gathering gloom. On and on through the deepening mud and the sobbing rain, till in the distance the nebulous lights of Martigny shone dimly through the mist. What visions of shelter and rest did their welcome beams reveal! Another mile and the goal was won! Fifty miles on foot since noon of yesterday ended at the threshold of our humble inn. Last night's sleepless vigil clamored for rest. The storm beat steadily on cottage roof and window-pane a soothing lullaby. It was Saturday night, and our weary tramp of three hundred and fifty miles amid the mountains of Switzerland was ended.

MOUNT VESUVIUS AND POMPEII.

FROM Naples to Pompeii—a distance of some fourteen miles—the road winds along the shores of the beautiful bay, often passing through deep cuttings in old lava streams and by old towns which have sprung up over the ruins of those embalmed below. By the road-sides huge century plants and thorny cactus trees thrive in the volcanic soil. Boats are gliding over the bluest of waters and fishermen are spreading their nets to dry on the sand. Seaward, Capri in misty outline couches upon the waves, and landward the breath of the volcano climbs the air and is wafted toward the buried city.—At Pompeii we procure a guide and set out for the crater of Vesuvius, some eight miles away. Our path leads at first through green fields, along cool water courses, and then over a road of ashes, walled on either hand with blocks of lava. Here and there we pass through villages built of the same volcanic material,

and beyond these the lower slopes of the mountain are covered with vineyards. Countless lizards clad in emerald and gold, bask in the warm sunshine as we pass, or rustle quickly over the hot ashes and vanish in the clefts of the roadside walls. Above the vineyards all traces of vegetation cease, since the surface is covered with ashes and cinders only. And this desolate region was once the garden of Italy! Steeper and steeper grows the way as we advance, and the picture of desolation becomes wilder and more terrible. At the base of the cone—two-thirds of the distance to the summit—the slope becomes almost impassably steep, and the path ascends by zig-zags over the loose ankle-deep ashes till lost in the clouds of vapor which hide the crater from our view. Looking up from below, it seems impossible to reach the summit by such a path.

The ashes slide under our feet, the ground is hot in places, and vapor issues therefrom as if the whole cone were one vast steam-pit! Now and then come clouds of suffocating fumes, compelling us to cover our faces with our handkerchiefs in order to breathe! Anon a breath of air comes

to our relief and we hurry on while we may. At last the crater's rim is reached, and half smothered by the stifling vapors we hasten round to the windward side. There yawns the smoking pit before us like the gateway to Pluto's underworld. It is a vast abyss of more than a mile in circumference, with jagged, lava-crusted sides, sloping steeply down, five hundred feet, to the fuming throat below! The wind tosses and tumbles the ascending volumes of steam and smoke, till they fall apart and give us glimpses to the bottom of the frightful chasm on whose brink we stand!

Around the rim of the crater the crust is in many places, too hot to walk on, and in holes and crevices under the layers of lava the heat is most intense. Sticks thrust into these places are speedily set on fire, and a cautious look therein reveals the red glow of the furnace! In these volcanic ranges heated by the central fires around the glowing core of our world, we cooked our dinner and then sat down on the volcano's rim to a repast of toast and eggs which an epicure might envy.—Vesuvius is four thousand feet above the sea. On the one hand the black cone of

Mt. Soma lifts itself to almost an equal height and on the other stretch away the blue waters of the sea. To the north lies Naples behind its crescent of white sand, and around the rocky point just beyond is Putioli where St. Paul landed on his way to Rome. To the south and west, between the mountain and the sea lies the region so often desolated by the lava floods of the past. It is dotted with towns and villages standing upon the congealed tides which engulfed and embalmed their predecessors.—The slope of Vesuvius in the direction of Pompeii is a wild picture of desolation. Crsted lava, scoria, and ashes cover it to the base, and black ridegs of congealed matter stretch away like a black finger of doom toward the buried city. It is a scene of terrible ruin, as though all the giant energies of nature had vied with each other in blighting and scourging one of the fairest regions of the earth. Five or six miles away on the plain stand the ruins of Pompeii. We descend the mountain along the track of the volcano's wrath and enter the silent streets of the doomed city. Two thousand years ago Pompeii was a populous city of twenty thousand inhabitants.

For eighteen hundred years it has been buried beneath the ashes of Vesuvius! For seven hundred years its very site was unknown! The work of excavation began more than a hundred years ago. To-day about half of the city is laid open to the light. The Forum, Amphitheatre, several temples and other public edifices, and many fine private dwellings have been uncovered. The houses were originally two stories in height;—the upper one being of wood and used for storage and servants' rooms. The rain of fire consumed, of course, the wooden portion, and now the roofless walls of the lower story, averaging some twenty feet in height, and composed of lava, concrete or brick, alone remain.

The streets are from fourteen to twenty-four feet wide and paved with great blocks of lava. The pavements are well worn by iron hoofs and deeply rutted by carriage wheels. In some streets the side-walks are higher than the road-way and here are

“Stepping stones from side to side
O'er which the maidens, with their water urns,
Were wont to trip so lightly.”

The private dwellings are entered by a narrow passage leading into a court, around

which all the rooms are situated and into which they all open. Over the entrance to the various rooms is usually a porch, or colonnade. In the center of the court is the reservoir for rain water. Some of these courts are yet adorned with statuary, though most of the best works of art have been removed to the museum in Naples. In many of the houses, especially in the dining and sleeping-rooms, fine frescoes yet remain upon the walls. Many of these wall paintings indicate but too plainly the pleasure-seeking tendency of those times. The floors of the rooms as well as of the courts and entrance halls are morsics of plain but tasteful patterns. Some of these are nearly as perfect to-day as when trodden by the beauty and fashion of Pompeii or the softer patter of childish feet two thousand years ago!—

We wander through these silent streets, peering into deserted dwellings where the frescoes are yet fresh on the walls;—we go into the shops, baths, wine-cellar, bakeries, courts, theatres and temples, musing on the busy throngs who lived and dreamed in this old city long before the Christmas Chorus of the Angels woke the echoes of

the far Judæan hills with heavenly melody. —In the work of excavation several hundred human skeletons have been found. In the museum are casts of several bodies, formed by pouring plaster of Paris into the cavities where they lay, thereby revealing the fearful contortions of the victims in the wild death-grapple of that terrible night of doom. One of these casts represents a man in the attitude of flight, and another, a fair young girl with rings on her delicate fingers! Here, also, are seen loaves of bread, "whole, hard, and black," bearing the baker's imprint, and just as they were taken from the oven where they were baked only 79 years after the birth of Christ! The old bakery with its ancient stone mills remains, but the hands that wrought at the wheels, or that moulded these enduring loaves were dust more than a thousand years before our New World was known! We walk through these desolate streets with no sound save the ghostly echoes of our footsteps among the ruins. The forum is silent, the temples are deserted, the theatres are abandoned. We tread the same pavement once trodden by the silent throng, we look upon the

same walls, admire the beauty of the public and private buildings and even invade the sleeping apartments of the rich and noble ; but the dreamers have long since vanished like the visions of the night though the pictured walls that guarded their slumbers yet remain, while silence and desolation have reigned over the city for eighteen hundred years !

A WALK IN THE ODENWALD.

IN the early dawn of a chill October morning we rumbled out of Heidelberg, northward, along the Bergstrasse to Bickenbach. On the left lay the broad green plains of the Rhine, and on the right the mountain region, once so wild and perilous, known as the Odenwald.

At Bickenbach we left the railway for a two days' walk through the forest of Odin. Far from being the wilderness which its ancient name indicates, it is now a thriving agricultural region, with rich fruitful valleys and hillsides, with towns and villages strung along its excellent roads, and footpaths winding over its hills and mountains, wherever a gray old ruin lifts its crumbling front to arrest the eye of the wanderer.

From the railway station to Jungenheim our path skirts the rich border of the Rhine meadows, stretching away in all the beauty and luxuriance of our own garden prairies of the West. The little dorf of Jungen-

heim, with its quaint, high-gabled houses and crooked streets, keeps guard like a faithful warden at this valley gateway of the Odenwald. Above the town is the picturesque county seat of Prince Alexander von Hessen, and higher on the hills we come to the sturdy tower and crumbling walls of the Castle of Alsbach. From the battlements of this old ruin, and through the loop-holes which time has made in its thick walls, we look forth upon a region of rare beauty—hill, mountain, and plain, and the shining curves of the Rhine sweeping toward the sea. Above us rise the heights of Melibocus, one of the highest peaks of this mountain region.

Up the shaded slopes, by many a toilsome path, winding under the broad, cool branches of oak and maple, we sought the summit and the lofty tower crowning the height, from which we looked forth as from a mount of vision. Around us lay the whole extent of the Odenwald. In the south stretched away the somber depths of the Black Forest. The broad, green valley of the Rhine lay before us, and the stately windings of the river could be traced for miles. Cities and villages were strung

along its shores, and the little valleys straying back from its border of meadows till lost among the mountains, held each its busy hamlets and its crumbling ruins. In the distance above the trees fringing the Rhine, the clustered towers of the Cathedral of Speyer lifted their ancient bells. Across the valley, upon a wooded height opposite, the gray old tower and battlements of the Castle of Auerbach peered above the forest trees and looked down on the valley world.

Leaving the old *forester* of Melibocus alone in his shady hermitage, we took our way across a spur of the mountains to Felsenberg. The farm work in this locality appears to be carried on principally by women. Potatoes and turnips were the chief crops unharvested, and these were being gathered in right merrily. The strength and endurance of these peasant women seems wonderful. In carrying heavy burdens upon their heads, and in all kinds of outdoor work they seem to be fully equal to the men.

On the Felsenberg is the celebrated "Sea of Rocks"—an area of several acres in the midst of the forest, covered with

great, massive blocks of syenite, tossed together in the wildest confusion. It looks as though the giants of the old mythology had stepped out of the realm of fable into these forests of Odin for a time, and had left behind them these tokens of their wild diversions.

Near this wonderful freak of nature lies the "Giants' Column." It is a syenitic pillar thirty feet long and four feet in diameter, fashioned out of the solid rock. When, by whom, or for what purpose, this huge shaft was hewn, is wholly unknown. It is so old that its history has been forgotten; yet there it lies, just where the workmen wrought upon it centuries ago—just as they left it one day and never returned! A few steps from this—as though the giants had really worshipped in these mountain solitudes—is the "Giants' Altar." It consists of a great ledge of granite, fifteen feet long, by ten broad, from which vast slabs have been removed by sawing and splitting. The face of the rock shows one of the saw-cuts to have been twelve inches deep across its entire length, before the slab was split off. Two other cuttings were begun but left unfinished; the one

about five inches deep, the other not exceeding two or three. Both these works—the Altar and the Column—very probably have some connection, and were doubtless wrought by the same workmen. Here they lie in this unfinished state, as though the laborers had only ceased for an hour, and while we look around for the implements of their labor, or muse over their workmanship, we half expect to see them return to their toil!

Passing down a mountain stream into the valley, we followed its windings among the hills, past hamlets and villages, to the old town of Schonberg with its castle residence of the Count of Erbach. From the charming gardens above the castle another cluster of forest-girt towers looked down upon us from a mountain slope in the distance. It was the famous old Castle of Auerbach, once a stronghold but now a ruin, and thither our pilgrim feet were turned.

It was a long, wearisome way, and a steep climb up the mountain; but after losing ourselves several times, we finally reached the object of our search—one of the grandest old ruins in all the region of

the Odenwald. The walls and watch tower are still standing. Huge pines are growing upon its battlements, and waving their sombre plumes over its deserted walls. We climbed up from the courtyard by a temporary stairway to the tower. From the walls we looked down on the tops of great trees which have sprung up in the roofless enclosure. From the watch-tower the surrounding landscape reddened with sunset, lay unrolled before us. We rambled about the old ruin, once the abode of strength and beauty, now the haunt of bats and owls, till dusk and darkness gathered over the scene, and then took the devious path down the slope through woods and vineyards to the picturesque old town of Weinheim in the valley.

The next morning we climbed the Schlossberg, a bold eminence overlooking the town. The mountain is covered with vineyards from base to summit and crowned with the ruins of Castle Windeck. Luscious clusters of purple grapes hung in tempting profusion around us as we climbed the height, but, alas! for us, overshadowed by the gracious protection of the

law. From Weinheim two picturesque valleys lead back into the mountains, one of which we followed many miles. Rich farming lands bordered the valley-streams, and industry, thrift and contentment seem to have made their homes here among the mountains. We met the peasants on their way to market bearing great burdens upon their heads, or resting upon the rude benches found everywhere in the shade of the wayside trees. Girls were driving oxen, or rather *cows*, drawing loads of wood to market. Oxen are seldom seen in this region, but a yoke of cows, or even a cow and a horse are considered a very efficient team. Indeed we have seen the latter working together when we have thought the *cow* the *better horse* of the two!—At Trosel, from whence we passed over the hills again, the people were making cider after a very primitive fashion. The apples were ground, or rather crushed, by placing them in a curved trough and rolling over them a great stone wheel whose axis was the radius of a circle of which the trough was a segment.—Fences are rarely found in Germany, and hence, when stock is let out to graze some one must always attend to look

after it. Many sheep are raised in this section, and a prominent feature of many a landscape is the shepherd and his dog with his white flock gathered about him.

After losing ourselves again on the wooded heights coming over the hills, and wandering aimlessly for some time, we finally emerged from the forest just above the town which we sought, and hastened down to enjoy its noonday hospitality. The place has a history of its own and even some life and energy left, albeit it has borne for centuries the euphonious name of Heiligkreuzsteinach! It was an old town before the native red man of America became acquainted with those blessing of civilizations which have so well-nigh exterminated his race. Its ancient church—now in ruins—was erected long before the New World was known, even before the birth of its adventurous discoverer! We rested a while in this old town, drowsy at noonday, as if dreaming over its ancient history, and then passed on down the valley whose meadows were white with bleaching webs of linen, the weaving of which forms one of the leading industries of this region.

From Shoneau we passed over the hills

again through a forest of great beauty and descended along the margin of one of those wild and picturesque valleys leading down to the storied Neckar and the quaint old town of Ziegelhausen by the river's brim. Thence along the shady margin of the shallow stream, bubbling ever of the sprites and goblins of its Black Forest home, we took our way in the early dusk till Heidelberg and its grand old Castle came in view, and our tramp of forty-miles, or more, in the forest of Odin was ended.

THROUGH THE BLACK FOREST.

WHO has not heard of the Black Forest of Germany, that native haunt of fairies, goblins, dwarfs and all the weird and grotesque hosts which figure so largely in German legend and story.

However familiar we may have been with the wild tales of this fairy land of our childhood, doubtless but few who have never visited the locality, have any very correct ideas concerning it. Though in the old Roman time, when it received its name, it was a vast unbroken wilderness, the deep murmur of whose somber foliage was sufficient in that superstitious age to people its dark recesses with the mysterious forms of the supernatural world, it is very far from being such a wild and untrodden region to-day. The Black Forest is situated in Baden and Wurtemberg and consists of an elevated tableland crowned with mountain peaks and furrowed with deep valleys. It has an area of over two

thousand square miles and is drained by the Murg, Neckar, Danube and other rivers. It is the centre of great industrial activities which affect more or less the commerce of the world. The amount of lumber which is floated annually in great rafts down the Rhine from this region to Holland is enormous. The

The fir forests afford masts and spars for countless vessels whose sails whiten many seas. Ornamental wood-carving is carried on to a great extent, and clock and watch-making are constantly growing branches of industry. In roads and bridle-paths, in picturesque valleys, wild and cultivated, in mountain torrents and cascades, in the beauty and grandeur of its swarthy fir forests, it is surpassed only by Switzerland.

Our tramp in the Black Forest began at Gernsbach, which we reached by rail late one night in August. This town is in the northern part of the Forest and some half-dozen miles from the renowned Baden-Baden. Here we slept, lulled by the music of flowing waters, and awoke in the morning to find our hotel situated upon the banks of the impetuous Murg, which here

seems in mad haste to reach the Rhine. We shouldered our packs ere the early sun looked over the hills and started on our walk up the Murgthal. Two miles from Gernsbach, upon a wooded height, stands the old castle of Eberstein, founded in the early part of the 13th century. Halting here for breakfast, we took a look at the old ivied walls and at the beautiful landscape lying at our feet. It was a picture of rare beauty—hills and mountains black with fir-forests, interspersed with green, fertile valleys sprinkled with thriving villages, and the whole walled in by loftier ranges in the distance. After doing ample justice to our repast, for which the hungry morning air had given us a keen relish, we descended to the valley and followed the windings of the Murg towards its source. A four hours' walk over an excellent post road lined with apple and pear trees, brought us to Forbach, a busy little dorf sunning itself in the valley and looking as though its houses had crowded together between the mountains for mutual safety.—At Forbach we left the post road and began the ascent of the mountain path to Herrenweiz. The lower slopes were

covered with oak, beech and maple, while higher up we entered the region of dark firs. In the narrow green valleys which creep timidly up among the dark heights, the peasants were cutting the short grass—men and women working together. Among the firs one can comprehend how this region came to be called the Black Forest. The woods are very dense, the trees tall and straight and the dark foliage so excludes the sun that twilight lingers here at noon-day. The trees are festooned with moss, while the rocky ground is completely carpeted and cushioned with the same green tapestry. On a high table-land surrounded by lofty mountains we found at last the village of Herrenweiz. It is the centre of a little valley dropped in between the high ranges, a bit of green in a somber setting. The men and women were making hay. How they manage to live in the winter is an unsolved problem. Over the mountains and down by a steep bridle-path we came to another green valley which, to relieve its utter loneliness, has blossomed out into a dorf. It is Hundsbach, which consists of a little church and some half-dozen houses. We lodged a

little farther on, where the valley is so narrow and deep that the sunshine only finds it during the mid-day hours.

Over twenty miles of mountain travel gave us sleep that was refreshing and an appetite that relished the humble fare of this Black Forest Inn. *Twenty cents* for lodgings and breakfast! That was all—just think of it!—With the early light we crawled out of the valley and into the woods again for the ascent of the Hornisgrinde, one of the highest mountains of the Schwartzwald. On our way we met children going to school at 6 o'clock in the morning! We learned from them that their school hours were from 6 to 9 and from 1 to 3. They carried their books in little knapsacks upon their backs, and each of them bade us a cheerful "Guten Morgen" as we met. To them their humble forest home was all the world.

Onward we went through the dwarfed trees and low shrubbery till we came out upon the high and marshy plateau overlooking a wide and varied landscape. The greater portion of the Black Forest lay spread out before us. We see how it is made up of woodland and cleared spaces,

the latter dotted with valley farms mountain meadows, orchard slopes and vineyards. To the west stretches the richest plain in Europe cleft by the gleaming curves of the Rhine. Lakes and villages nestle among the mountains and over all is lifted the foliage of the stately firs whose dark and somber character makes the name of the region so appropriate.

Some five hundred feet below this tableland and surrounded by fir-clad mountains lies the dark tarn known as the Mummelsee. It is said to be inhabited by water nymphs who at every full moon come to the surface and revel in its light till the cock crows and the first flush of dawn warns them to retire to their grottoes under the waves. The only water sprites that we saw were two pedestrians, who hastily disrobing, plunged into the cool waters, regardless of the beautiful Undines dwelling below. Down from this wild mountain lake by a zig-zag bridle-path we came to a desolate region of rocks which looked as though the Titans of the mythological ages had pitched them here in confusion from all the mountains around:—down, down to the post-road, the Murg, and the little vil-

lage of Seebach—another knotted tangle in the emerald thread of the Murgthal.—After dinner and rest we started by a foot-path over the mountains for Allerheiligen. The path took us through the wildest valley that we had yet seen—the Gottschlachthal. A wild stream flows through it, leaping over the rocks in many a cascade of foam. The mountains are lofty on either hand, while the cleft is deep and narrow. In many places the ascent is by stairways hewn in the rock.

Above and beyond, this narrow defile spreads out into green meadows, through which we pass, and on by a succession of mountains and valleys, till near the close of the day we stand upon the heights overlooking a green dell where Allerheiligen nestles in the shade. We descended to visit the picturesque ruins of the old abbey founded in 1196. It is roofless and slowly crumbling away, though much of its walls, including several lofty arches, yet remain. Once the home of monks celebrated for their learning, and the seat of a school patronized by the illustrious and noble, its mouldering ruins speak now of desolation and decay. Here it stands, a monument

of the past, with the history of seven centuries clustering around it! We lingered long in the shadow of these ivied walls, trying in fancy to restore the abbey's ancient glory, and to re-people it again with the throngs which have vanished with the ages and long since turned to dust.—By the old road, which is steeper but shorter than the new one, we descended to Ottenhofen—a walk of six miles through the deepening twilight—where we were soon lost in dreams. Six miles farther in the early morning through the Kappellerthal—a widening plain of thrifty meadows and orchards—we emerged at last into the great plain of the Rhine. In the windings of the road the mountains closed the valley behind us and our walk in the Black Forest was ended.

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